

November 3, 2009

MLPA Initiative  
c/o California Natural Resources Agency  
[MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov](mailto:MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov)

**Re: Support for New Option 1 at Point Dume, Palos Verdes, and San Diego**

Dear Members of the Blue Ribbon Task Force:

At your last meeting October 20-22, I was very impressed by your hard work and thoughtfulness as you carefully considered the proposed options, the scientific guidance, and the massive number of public comments submitted over the course of the three days. I am hopeful that this careful deliberation will enable you to choose a preferred protected area network that truly meets the goals of the Marine Life Protection Act – conserving the health of our South Coast ocean ecosystems for the benefit of all.

I write today to emphasize how important it is for you to select clusters that meet scientific guidelines and the conservation purpose of the Marine Life Protection Act, especially at three key places – Point Dume, Palos Verdes, and San Diego. For these areas, staff's new Option 1 (or the original proposals on which it is based) will include the necessary habitat for the protected areas to work.

As a longtime Los Angeles resident with a passion for the ocean, I understand that protecting an area encompassing *Point Dume's* submarine canyon walls, upwelling currents, kelp forests and nearshore rocky habitat would allow this productive spot to support greater densities of sea life. That, in turn could help replenish marine life in Santa Monica Bay. Option 1 creates an MPA cluster likely to meet conservation goals because it encompasses the whole canyon and a portion of the interconnected kelp beds. At *Palos Verdes* please choose Option 1, which meets science guidelines by connecting the nursery habitats at Point Dume and Laguna. In *San Diego*, I hope you will also choose Option 1, because it includes productive habitats (kelp forest, surfgrass, rocky intertidal and rocky reef areas) and ensures connectivity with those habitats in Orange County. Option 1 in San Diego is also a good choice because it protects quality habitat at La Jolla, while leaving north La Jolla and all of Point Loma open for fishing.

As David Benton – a fisherman raised in California and working in Alaska –stated in an article in the San Gabriel Valley Tribune, California's newly created marine protected areas in the North Central Coast are based on science with the purpose of ensuring healthy ecosystems that benefit fishermen, consumers, and all other ocean-goers. He likened California's path to that of Alaska, which prides itself on combining science-based fishery management and protected areas. A new study by Worm and Hilborn underscores the fact that combinations of measures, including catch reductions and areas closed to fishing, are more effective than one set of measures alone. Benton believes Alaska's closures have helped the state achieve a 30-year record of relatively sustainable fishing. There is good reason to expect that a well designed system of protected areas for California will help marine life withstand the daunting pressures of population growth, climate change, and other threats.

You face the challenging job, next week, of making sure the South Coast network *is* designed well, and *does* provide the benefits Californian's need. I respectfully urge you to choose Option 1 for key areas like Point Dume, Palos Verdes, and San Diego, because they reflect thoughtful compromises, meet the science guidelines and conservation goals, and get the job done.

Sincerely,

Dayna Bochco

